

American City & County

Your Honor, I Plead Guilty, Conveniently

Long Beach, Calif., Municipal Court will take a technological leap into the future in February when it launched "Auto Clerk," a 24-hour, seven-day system through which the public can pay traffic and moving violation fines.

The new system will allow people to pay traffic fines and moving violations without having to miss work.

Two of the kiosks, similar to automated bank teller machines, will be located outside the Municipal Court's main entrance. The machines offer "touch screen" operation with easy operational instructions in both English and Spanish.

Jim Weaver, Long Beach Municipal Court administrator, says that "the court was extremely interested in the project because almost everything people wait in line for in traffic court can now be done faster, including paying for or continuing a ticket, pleading not guilty or signing up for traffic school."

Auto Clerk will also provide available court dates and schedule future appearances when necessary and provide detailed information on Small Claims Court filing, trial and post judgement procedures.

Michael North, president of North Communications, added "Auto Clerk is the latest example of an important trend in government — the use of multimedia technology to make information and services more accessible to the citizens, giving them a more convenient way to do business with the



Auto Clerk, the first of its kind in the nation, will allow people to pay traffic fines, plead not guilty or sign up for traffic school at their convenience.

court. It will also benefit the county by enhancing public service and controlling operating costs."

Auto Clerk, the first of its kind in the nation, will be closely evaluated for possible use in other courts. It will be linked by computer to the county's central data processing center. □

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